

Minutes of the Emergency Commission on Sixth Congressional District Gerrymandering
Wineland Building, 4th Floor Conference Room
January 4, 2018
11:00 a.m.

Co-Chair Alexander Williams opened the meeting at 11:02 a.m. The floor was opened for commissioner introductions.

Commissioners Present:

Alexander Williams, Jr. – Co-Chair

Walter Olson – Co-Chair

Ashley Oleson – Co-Chair

Maury S. Epner, Esq.

Deborah Lundahl

Christopher Howard

Luis T. Gutierrez, Jr.

Matthew Douglas, Esq.

Kathleen Jo Parsons Tabor, Esq.

Co-Chair Walter Olson discussed recent events surrounding redistricting in Maryland.

- Congressional redistricting ordinarily occurs in 10-year cycles. The objective of this commission arises out of litigation filed by Republicans who felt disenfranchised. A three-judge panel ruled the drawing of the sixth district was unconstitutional. In response to the ruling, Governor Hogan convened this emergency commission. The case referenced is still in litigation.
- This commission is being asked to correct what went wrong last time.
- The three co-chairs (Williams, Olson, and Oleson) all served on Maryland's Redistricting Reform Commission, established by Governor Hogan by executive order in 2015. The Redistricting Reform Commission received public input by hosting seven public meetings throughout Maryland.
- Co-Chair Olson suggested the commissioners familiarize themselves with the court opinion and the Redistricting Reform Commission's Final Report.

Secretary Robert McCord discussed the Department of Planning's involvement with the commission.

- The Maryland Department of Planning (Planning) will assist the commission in fulfilling its duties as outlined in the executive order and will work with both the commission and the public to make the process as user-friendly as possible.
- Secretary McCord introduced Jesse Ash as the Planning point of contact for the commission.
- The Secretary presented a draft handout of what the commission's website, which will link to the Governor's website, could look like and asked for commission feedback.
- The website will allow users to create a password protected account to generate proposed sixth district maps to submit to the commission for consideration. The website will be interactive, has accurate population data, and will show district characteristics based on how the user adjusts the map boundaries. The software will automatically funnel out impossible parameters.

- The process Planning is proposing will be an inclusive one; the commission will also be able to accept both electronic and hardcopy map proposals from the public.

Chris Mincher, Deputy Counsel with the Office of the Governor, gave an overview of the lawsuit and executive order.

- Provided a breakdown of the court's opinion and factual background as described by the court.
- Suggested that the commissioners read the entire court opinion and have the executive order with them at all meetings.
- Reviewed the commission member qualifications as outlined by the executive order as well as the tasks the commission has been assigned to complete. The commission is also bound to adhere to Open Meetings Act procedures.

Co-Chair Williams shared expectations of commission members.

- Emphasized the importance that the commission operate in a fair, independent, and transparent manner. Commissioners shall use collective wisdom and cut down on partisan leanings.

Commissioners coordinated dates for upcoming meetings.

- 1st Public Hearing in 6th District (Frederick Community College) - January 14th, 7 p.m.
- 2nd Public Hearing in 8th District (Montgomery) - January 31st, 7 p.m.
- 3rd Public Hearing (Western Maryland) - February 6th, 6:30 p.m.
- Commission Workshop (Annapolis) - February 20th, 10 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m.